

THE INQUIRY

Occasional Papers Published on the Top
Floor of 129 East 52d Street, New York

VOL. II, No. 7



NOVEMBER, 1926

Helsingfors

A Step Toward International Understanding

WHEN a semi-capitalistic and predominantly orthodox organization gets on the skids, there is no telling how far it will slither. When it manufactures its own skids for its own use and, in broad daylight, deliberately slips the skids at even intervals under the whole length and breadth of its foundation, almost any adventurous observer is willing to get on board just for the sake of the ride.

What happened at the gateway of Russia in the Finnish capital early in August was undoubtedly of considerable significance to the Y. M. C. A. which was holding its world conference there. It was of almost equal importance to that great company of people who, having not much contact with, or use for, the Y. M. C. A., yet are interested in newer methods of social education. For, the Helsingfors conference exhibited in an extraordinary way and on a broad scale efforts to introduce democratic methods and a thorough-going discussional technique into an international gathering.

There are both opponents and friends of the Y. M. C. A. in many countries who would find themselves somewhat in sympathy with the following paragraphs in an address delivered at the plenary meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist Youth Internationale, in Moscow, 1926. The paragraphs are quoted from a report that appeared in the *Jugend Internationale* (Vienna).

The World's Alliance of the Y. M. C. A. begins to organize the young laborers in view of their social and economic needs and this even in America, where the young laborers, as compared to other countries, are tolerably well situated.

This is only a beginning, and we do not know whether it will be possible for them to realize their aims, but it is significant that they find it necessary to look for other methods in order to get in among the young laborers and group them together. It proves that this organization has understood the part the young laborers will play in the near future and how necessary it is to try every possible method to draw them away from the influence of the Communist Youth Internationale.

The Y. M. C. A.'s, which are strongly influenced from America, are specially interested in the questions which are directly connected with the interests of American imperialism, and I am sure we are not mistaken in saying that in the next few years we shall have to fight this organization as our chief enemy in a number of countries. This organization will this year hold a conference in Helsingfors, and at this conference the conditions of the young laborers of Europe will not be studied, although some European groups have desired this. This will, however, according to the German periodicals of this organization, be done in the national Alliances. But what have they on their program? The race question, the Negro question; questions which are exactly those which interest America in the first place, and which are most clearly connected with the furthering of the imperialistic plans of America. The race question is taken up for study, because it is desired to support the American policy on the Far East, the Negro question is taken up because the exploitation of the Negroes in America will be of decisive importance in the next few years.

Comrades, we must clearly observe the activity of this organization, which has enormous resources at its disposal and which is

THE HELSINGFORS CALENDAR

- 1921—World's Committee of Y. M. C. A., meeting at Utrecht, authorized a study of the Association's relation to industrial, social, racial, and international problems.
- 1922—At Copenhagen, the World's Committee instructed the executive of the Alliance in consultation with the National Councils to proceed with the inquiry.
- 1924—Decision reached to get new data from the mind of youth itself. Questionnaires and study outlines, developed from actual discussions among youth, prepared in 22 languages and used in 40 countries. This inquiry proceeded through 1925, 37 national Alliances eventually sending summaries of studies to the central office at Geneva.
- May, 1925—At its Budapest meeting the World's Committee decided to attempt a democratic organization of the program of the Helsingfors conference.
- Autumn, 1925—Selection of delegates began. To ensure real representation, national Alliances were requested to appoint as delegates only those who had taken part in actual study.
- January, 1926—Conference at Geneva of some 70 leaders from 20 countries reviewed preliminary national reports, and prepared syllabus for final period of study.
- June, 1926—Assignment of the 1,500 delegates to 50 international groups of thirty, each group to be led by a team of three, representing three nationalities and two languages.
- July 28-31, 1926—Conference at Helsingfors of the 50 teams of leaders for training in group leadership.
- August 1-6, 1926—Sessions of Helsingfors conference. Decision reached to continue the processes of study begun, by means of local study groups, international research, regional conferences and literature—all looking toward revision of present Association programs.

supported by the bourgeoisie in America and other countries. This is the particular duty of our groups in those countries where American imperialism is most strongly felt. In this way only, will we be able efficiently to counteract the pernicious work of this organization. . . .

Our comrades in China have a very difficult task. They must educate thousands of new members and instruct them in such a way that they can carry on the struggle victoriously. We have to reckon in China with a very strong Christian propaganda which is particularly represented by the Young Men's Christian Associations. Our comrades in China have, during the last year, carried on a splendid campaign against this organization and also against Christianity in general.

If only the Executive Committee of the Communist Youth Internationale could have participated in the Helsingfors conference, some of them might have come to the conclusion that the Y. M. C. A. had adopted a method of conducting its conference which would out-Bolshevik the Bolsheviks.

For over two years the committee in charge had made a studied effort to achieve the maximum of democratic participation and democratic method in the preparation and conduct of the conference. The influences which led to this action were these: A minority of the delegates attending the annual meetings of the World's Committee of the Y. M. C. A. in Utrecht in 1921 and at Copenhagen in 1922 were painfully aware of the fact that the war demanded a drastic overhauling of the program and methods of the Y. M. C. A. As a result, the committee authorized a study of the extent to which the Y. M. C. A.'s throughout the world were proving a factor in the application of the spirit and teachings of Jesus to the solution of industrial, social, racial and international questions. As the study proceeded, in answer to the criticism that such an approach ignored the necessary background of personal religion, it was officially designated as "An Inquiry as to the Christian Way of Life in Personal, Social and International Relations."

By 1924 it had become clear to many that the Association could only function realistically in this inquiry if it began to re-examine and overhaul its own internal methods. Conviction grew that the organization could not suggest more Christian or more democratic relations in industry or between races and nations unless its own organizational procedure and life relinquished its former reliance on authority, prestige and tradition, and became free, scientific-minded and democratic in its own life and in its relationship to the youth of the world. The whole organization must be put in reverse. The very qualities which seem to be at variance with the spirit of Christ in industrial and political life were realized to be too often the dominating characteristics in the life of the Association. By 1925, therefore, the leaders who met in preliminary conference in May at Budapest were ready to urge that Helsingfors was to be approached not with an emotional exuberance over the organization's triumphant achievements, but in the leaner and more painstaking mood of scientific inquiry as to what part, if any, the Y. M. C. A. could play in finding a more Christian way of life for itself and the world. This automatically demanded a fresh study of the mind of youth, its perplexities and its idealism, its defeats and its triumphs. Only on such a background as this could the World's Conference be a realistic step in the process of changing the World's Alliance from a federation of isolated movements, each largely out of touch with the problems and achievements of the others and largely out of touch with the new spirit of youth, into a

genuine world movement. In such a union the national Alliances, sensitive to and really representing the youth of their countries, would be bound together in a world fellowship shot through with the spirit of mutual understanding and skilled in the technique of cooperation. On this basis, the World's Alliance might eventually become an aid to the youth of the world in substituting cooperation for conflict in the adjustment of industrial, racial and national differences.

It takes but a short flight of the imagination to find a special meaning in the selection of Helsingfors as a meeting place, for only a few hours away are Leningrad and Moscow where another group has set itself the same problem—to find a better way for men to live together. That group believe, it is said, that they have no need of religion in any form. They have pointed out the many failures in a professedly Christian society to provide justice for its members. Helsingfors had need for no further reminder that there must be no evasion of issues; that it must be a quest for realities. Every step in the long continuing process of preparing for and conducting the conference had to be tested by this—If such a practice, such a plan, such a purpose became universal, would it make for better understanding in industrial, social and political life? Would conflict, war and jealousy increase? Had each step that was proposed the texture of which human cooperation and understanding are made? The conference was to be just one event in a search which had had its flickering beginnings at Utrecht and Copenhagen and which was to continue through the conference into the following years.

MAKING IT REPRESENTATIVE

Now, if Helsingfors was to be in any true sense a *world* conference of the Y. M. C. A., some means had to be devised by which the rank and file of members, and not merely the 1,500 official delegates, might participate in its proceedings, for the official delegates could be representative of their constituencies only if their own personal experience and knowledge were supplemented by active study in their communities. An international questionnaire and study outline was prepared and sent out from the Geneva headquarters of the World's Committee to be used in group discussion. It was an attempt to understand the mind of youth and, in the light of this, to discover what transformation is required in the attitudes and plans of the Y. M. C. A. This basic questionnaire, containing 486 questions, was translated into about a score of languages. In its original or in a modified form it was used by thousands of groups for periods ranging from eight to eighteen months. In England alone, 12,000 answers to the questionnaire were received. In several countries the use of the questionnaire encouraged, even before the Helsingfors conference, experiments with totally new methods of social and religious education. In some, discussion groups on a democratic basis, meeting in a somewhat scientific temper, were organized for the first time. "Authority" was being unhorsed. Youth in a mood of serious inquiry was attempting the saddle.

A condensed summary of this mass of material has been published in a pamphlet of 142 pages, entitled "Youth and the Christian Way of Life in a Changing World." Supplementary to this was a brief summary, entitled "The Younger Boy." These, with a series of informational and data papers prepared in the light of the returns to

the questionnaire, were published in *The Sphere* and sent to practically all of the delegates for their final study on the journey to Helsingfors. Fascinating as these summaries are, the committee was under no delusion as to their value as objective evidence. They were merely hints of a vital, world-wide process of democratic inquiry. They were not verified data of scientific value. They represented an invaluable and creative process. They did not purport to represent finality. A majority of the groups, for example, made an initial assumption as to the uniqueness or superiority of the Christian religion, the Christian Church, and sometimes of the Y. M. C. A. Yet that there was a large measure of freedom is evidenced by thousands of answers.

Here are some from *England*, regarding the Church:

The attitude of the Churches toward war and social evils, on which they take a very weak line, keeps away the masses of the people.

The Churches fail to attract the men outside their ranks—men will not come in on the terms laid down by the Churches, which are not open to opinion outside their creeds. The beauty of faith has degenerated into a tiresome and stale formula. They do not grasp the truth that “where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty!”

Its complacency, bigotry and wranglings fill us with disgust; it contributes nothing towards the world's welfare.

The Churches are the chief harbingers of snobbery.

Chinese boys voiced these criticisms of Christianity:

It is a kind of instrument to make China weak.

It is a camp of imperialism.

It is a superstition and it always interferes with politics.

It is not necessary in this scientific world.

It is a foreign religion.

The principles of Christianity are not practicable; therefore Christians are hypocrites.

It is not a religion of equality.

Advocating non-resistance, it is impracticable and non-effective.

Does not fit Chinese customs.

Christians tend to segregate themselves.

Is too autocratic.

In choosing delegates to Helsingfors, the World's Committee had urged that the national committees should include only persons who had actually participated in the preliminary inquiry by leading groups studying the Helsingfors questions. Scotland, for example, chose all its delegates, save two, a year in advance so that they might have a full ten months' opportunity of getting the widest collaboration of youth in their own communities in the world-wide study. In January, 1926, leaders from twenty countries assembled for several days in Geneva to review the preliminary national reports and, in the light of the experience gained thus far, to determine the procedure for (a) the final period of preparation, February to July, and (b) the general method to be adopted for the Helsingfors program. This conference prepared a fresh syllabus, based on the process of study up to date, and sent this with a complete bulletin of instruction to the national Alliances with the request that this syllabus, so far as possible, be used by all of the delegates in groups in their own com-

munities, and especially by those who were likely to serve as group leaders at Helsingfors.*

At this meeting it was finally decided that Helsingfors could best achieve its main aims if the whole conference were broken up for the greater part of each day into small, internationally constituted groups which could really “confer.” Here again, the committee was mindful of the fact that youth could not readily function in finding solutions for big social and international questions if the very methods and processes of the conference itself were out of accord with sound processes of social progress. This decision involved the seemingly impossible task of enabling many who were wholly untrained in group leadership quickly to acquire a new skill. Practice in the use of the January syllabus, illumined by the full bulletin and suggestions to all group leaders, helped. But a further step was required. This involved invitations to 150 group leaders to reach Helsingfors four days in advance of the conference in order that a full two days might be given to a further period of experimental training.

In this two days' conference at Geneva there were consideration of the general plan of the main conference, discussion of the probable topics for the first two days and opportunity for mutual help on the methods of conducting the groups. As this conference proceeded, it became clearer than ever that it was necessary to provide for a real interchange of experience and conviction in order that every one of the 1,500 delegates might have the fullest opportunity of making his own contribution to the total thought of the conference. Frequently in a convention, even in one's own country, the delegates from a particular locality associate together and come into very little contact with other delegates. In an international gathering, there is still more likelihood that the national delegations remain together, somewhat isolated from the others. At former world's conventions of the Y. M. C. A., delegates had travelled thousands of miles, only to associate with the members of their own group on arrival. The question could well be asked—“Why should they go so far to do just what they might have done at home?” If association with members of other nationalities was to be left to chance, only the more aggressive individuals would form international contacts; but the division of the entire conference into small groups of thirty [more fully described below], meeting for a total of about sixteen hours of lively conversation during the four days, was to afford an opportunity really to enter into intimate fellowship by each delegate with representatives from a dozen other nationalities. The first condition, therefore, of international fellowship was to be met by an actual physical arrangement which would divide the entire conference into such internationally constituted conversational groups. In addition, some program for the days of group discussion was necessary which would give the greatest freedom for conversation in the groups and yet secure a measure of unity in the ground covered by the discussion. This involved a limitation of subject area; at the same time the invoking of some device which would ensure that there be no predetermination of the outcome of the discussion. Common fields of discussion were essential to unity, but what was discovered in these fields must be left entirely to the individual groups.

The preliminary world-wide questionnaire and inquiry had brought a certain remittal of problems to the con-

* It was used by probably only two-thirds of the delegates.

THE SPIRITUAL significance of the Helsingfors conference was stamped all through the devotional sessions, the group meetings and the plenary. Whatever else the conference might be, it was unmistakably a rallying of spiritual forces, to fight out the great battles of God in the new age we are facing. It was from a spiritual point of view that the most human problems of our day were discussed. And it was with a definite spiritual reference to the mind of Jesus that the gross sins of men and women, the shortcomings of our civilization and culture, and the inconsistency of our Christian living were mercilessly scrutinized. Even when disagreements occurred, as they should occur, the spiritual issues were emphasized as never before in similar assemblies. . . .

The statesmanlike leadership of the conference, the daring study of many subjects that usually are academic issues or appear on the agendas of the assemblies of rulers of nations, were also a very peculiar feature of the Parliament of Youth. And it was wonderful to see how the younger delegates, with frankness, appropriateness and dignity, joined, with a perfect sense of freedom, their experienced leaders in the discussion of the subjects they were studying together.

—From an account by Dr. Erasmo Braga, Brazilian leader, in the October number of *The Sphere* [organ of the World's Committee of the Y. M. C. A., 3, Rue Général Dufour, Geneva] which contains a symposium on Helsingfors and After.

ference: Delegates would come to Helsingfors in a representative capacity to consider questions referred to them by their own communities and, consequently, the Helsingfors conference was to be in the nature of an international council of individuals who, in their own countries, had already considered some of these questions from a local and national viewpoint and who came to Helsingfors to consult with delegates from other nations. Consequently, the plan for the four days had to take into account the records of these preliminary investigations in "Youth" and in the other documents.

It is needless to recount the number of hours and days spent by the organizers of the groups in the selection of leaders. In order to insure the international character of the discussions, it was agreed that two leaders, representative of two different cultures, should be in charge of each group. It was comparatively easy to arrange teams of two men having a common language for about thirty-five groups. Then the puzzle became more and more difficult. How much easier it would have been to entrust the leadership of each group to one man! But how evident it was even during the preparatory conference, that the very efforts of two leaders to understand each other's point of view was the best guarantee of the success of the group meetings.

The organizers first of all attempted to find out those among the leaders whose names had been given by the national committees, who had had experience in leading discussions of the type of those that were to take place in Helsingfors. But they were so few! They belonged to two or three nationalities only! Some were obviously too young! Many spoke only one language! Several of them had no knowledge whatever of other cultures or religious creeds than their own!

These considerations led to the idea of a team of three

men, two leaders and one recorder, to work together. Sometimes the recorder was to act as interpreter between the two leaders. Sometimes he was just an experienced man put in this position to help less experienced men who for other reasons had to be appointed as leaders. Experience at Helsingfors was to prove that in many respects the function of the recorder was as important and as difficult as that of the leaders. The integration of the work of the groups and the summarizing of each day's discussion were only made possible by the good records of a large proportion of the group meetings.

BRINGING ORDER TO BABEL

The preliminary conference at Geneva, as it faced the problems likely to arise from this type of conference, was of one mind—that every effort had to be made to assure that the groups would represent an intimate fellowship of friends from a number of nations who had met together for conversation about questions of common concern. In no sense were they to be thought of as classes or formal meetings. If any one person was to monopolize the conversation by making a long speech, interest would lag, and the best results would not be secured. The friendly spirit of a conversation would be spoiled also by formal pleading or argument for a given point of view, for those who enter into debate usually seek only to win their points and rarely to understand and learn from others. An intimate fellowship could only take place when those present believed so much in each other that they could speak frankly and not carry on a polite diplomatic interchange, hiding their real convictions. Each delegate must be helped both to speak and to listen. He must expect to contribute of his own experience and convictions and equally to learn from others. Through the preliminary material sent to all the leaders and to the delegates themselves, every effort had been made to develop this spirit in the groups. Instead of giving their attention exclusively to arguing for their own convictions, they were urged to adopt the attitude of inquiry and to seek, sympathetically and completely, to understand the spirit and convictions of others, especially those who differed radically from themselves.

At the preliminary leaders' conference it also became clear that whereas, when only two or three are engaged in a conversation, no advance plan is necessary, particularly if they have plenty of time, when twenty-five or thirty representing a dozen different nationalities seek to carry on a conversation, some plan of procedure is necessary if it is not to end in confusion. Some method, too, was required by which the general plan for the conference might be brought to each group and whereby the results in each of the groups could be reported to the others and all be enabled to take their full part in arriving at general conclusions. The business of the leaders would be not primarily to express their own points of view, but to get others to express theirs. Tests of successful leadership would be (a) the degree to which all of the members of the group contributed to the march of thought, (b) the degree to which every point of view represented in the group had its opportunity of finding expression, and (c) the extent to which at the same time the problem under discussion was kept clearly in the minds of the participants and the discussion kept from getting into confusion. A definite procedure, though without rigidity, was therefore planned. In order that all the leaders

might cooperate in a common purpose, provision was made for a daily conference of the leaders. This was all the more important since the majority of the leaders had prior to this year never acted as chairmen of groups of this character.

The world-wide inquiry had indicated that the main areas of conflict in the life situations of young men and boys were believed to be—

1. Home and relations to elders;
2. Sex and relation between the sexes;
3. Life work choice and business and industry;
4. Sports;
5. Participation in national affairs;
6. Racial and world relations.

During the month immediately preceding the conference, the Geneva secretariat of the World's Committee had made a careful study of the personnel of the delegates from the point of view of culture, language and nationality. On the basis of this study, it was finally decided to divide the conference into fifty groups of thirty each. Each group would contain delegates from twelve to fourteen different nations and from the seven principal cultures represented in the conference (roughly defined as Latin, Teutonic, Slav, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, Oriental, Negroid). The official languages of the conference were to be French, German and English. By design, the delegates were so assigned to groups that practically every group would have to be conducted in two languages, either French-German, German-English, or French-English. The committee deliberately decided to accept the handicap of language in order that every delegate might experience vividly the language difficulty in international intercourse. For each group there was chosen in advance, as we have seen, a trio of officers—a leader, a deputy-leader, and a recorder. Each team of three represented three nationalities and two or more languages.

In fitting deference to the great and general hospitality which the citizens of Helsingfors and the Government of Finland had accorded to the conference, the opening day was given largely to such ceremonies as would enable the conference to give effective witness to its deep appreciation of Finnish hospitality and the stimulating political experiment which Finland is making in the family of nations. That evening the chairman of the conference presented a survey of conditions in the various countries and called attention to the significance of the strange and unfamiliar plan by which the main activity of the conference was to be carried on day after day in fifty small groups, each one of which would be a real international gathering in miniature.

FIFTY LITTLE LEAGUES

Certain statesmen who are only partially content with the League of Nations are advocating the formation of five additional leagues. Had they visited Helsingfors on the morning of August 2, they would have seen no less than fifty small international leagues trooping out of the great cathedral, led by Finnish boy scouts, to the neighboring school rooms which were to be the main theatres of the life of the conference. The physical arrangements of the conference in themselves were indicative of the new

democratic note which is coming into religious education. The vitality of the conference resided not in the great assembly in church but in the classrooms of the higher public schools of the city. And even here the method of the conference involved material rearrangements. The democratic educational method necessitated the unscrewing in each room of thirty benches, row on row, converging on a teacher as the sole source of enlightenment and rearranging them into a hollow square or, more often, a circle, so that each member of the group should easily be seen and heard by all the others without the formality of getting up to face them. The first day's program was planned (a) to secure a survey of the situations facing youth in the various nations so as to determine which interests and problems are universal and common in all countries and which are peculiar to particular countries, (b) to enable the delegates from each country to understand in full the situations in other nations as they appeared to the delegates from those nations and (c) to determine the areas of difficulty and conflict to which special attention should be given in the conference. From the whole list of suggested topics each group chose two areas for discussion the following day. Each delegate had been asked to apply three criteria in ranking the various questions—(1) its significance in his own country, (2) its world-wide importance and (3) the relative urgency of its challenge to the conference.

Each day the groups met for approximately two and a half hours in the morning and an hour and a half in the afternoon, closing at 3:30. From 3:30 to 4:30 the fifty recorders, with the collaboration of the other leaders of the groups, wrote the report of the day's work according to a common outline. Every afternoon from 4:30 to 6:00 the 150 leaders of the 50 groups met in conference to

THE DISCUSSIONS were held in a spirit of deep fellowship, of prayer, and of brotherly love. On all sides we found a real desire to understand each other, notwithstanding the impediments of language and different ways of expression, and to help each other to new light. We are deeply thankful for all that we have been able to learn from our brethren from other countries and for the enlargement of our vision that has been given to us, and we hope that the contributions that God entrusted to us to make and that we have made joyfully and freely, have been of some usefulness to our fellow delegates.

On different occasions we had to face the fact that among us were important differences, not only in Christian experience and expression but also in our conceptions about important problems of inner life where we should have preferred to see inner harmony. But we remind ourselves with deep thankfulness of the unity in faith that was revealed to us, notwithstanding the differences, to a degree that far surpassed our expectations. Our unity rests in Christ, and we experienced this all the more as our impression of the pluriformity of contributions and conceptions grew deeper. The discussion groups have proved themselves to be an excellent instrument toward establishing close contacts between all members of our delegation and fellow delegates from all continents and countries, so that everyone was able to make his personal contribution to the final result of the conference.

—From the report of the German delegates to the German Associations.

present oral summaries of the day's work to supplement written reports. This arrangement enabled the leaders of each group to inform themselves of the progress of all the other groups and served also as a coordinating center for outlining the framework of the next day's discussions. From 6:00 to 8:00 each evening a committee of five teams of three each made a detailed study of the fifty written reports of the group work of the day. Each team contained one who could read all of the English reports, one for all the French reports and one for all the German reports. Most of the members of this Committee of Seventeen could read the reports in at least two languages. After all of the reports had been carefully studied, the Committee of Seventeen compared notes and finally designated each evening three of their number, one for each language, to give at 8:30 to the whole 1,500 delegates assembled in a body a final summary of the day's discussions. These three reports were not translations of a common version, but were three individual interpretations of the total process.

The attendance at the group meetings was as large and as well sustained as that at the joint meetings in the evenings; the attendance fluctuated from 79 per cent to 82 per cent throughout all the sessions of the groups. Laid over against the standards set by the best groups, two of the fifty might be written off as complete failures. Of the remaining forty-eight groups, four or five were drab. But there was educational value in the failures and the semi-failures. With the aid of inspectors, each allotted to a number of groups for daily visits, spending a few minutes in each, an effort was made to discover in which groups the discussion was proceeding smoothly and where, for one reason or the other, no progress was being made. In certain instances, as a result of this inspection, rather delicate adjustments in the disposition of leaders or interpreters were found necessary; and in some cases an individual was transferred from one group to another where he could be of particular assistance in stimulating a group, on which previously some inhibition had seemed to rest, to enter into the discussion more freely.

LIONS IN THE PATH

This is not the place to enter into a detailed report of the content of the discussions. The areas for discussion were so extensive and the diversity of experience so great that a volume of large dimensions would be inadequate. The readers of *THE INQUIRY* can get access to this material in the official conference report and in the numerous interpretations that have appeared in the press, secular and religious. The emphasis of this article must continue on the nature of the *process*. The simple thread which ran through all the discussions and which, in fact, enabled each group to conduct a single discussion, instead of many, was this: (a) What exactly are the problems confronting youth today? (b) What precisely is the nature of the conflicting loyalties which makes it so difficult to solve these problems? (c) How shall we attempt their solution? (d) What contribution, if any, has Christianity to make? (e) In the light of the foregoing, just what are the task and problem of the Y. M. C. A. for the future?

In spite of the process of study and inquiry which had been attempted in the different countries, many delegates came to Helsingfors not only as inquirers but also as evangelists. To them a divine revelation had been given. They were in no uncertainty as to the nature and implica-

tions of the Christian gospel. It would be difficult for them, they said, to remain in the fellowship of the World's Alliance if they were not satisfied, as the conference proceeded, that the views of all the national Alliances in great measure coincided with their own. The central principle on which the conference was organized was at first repugnant to such as these, and it should be added that it was equally repugnant to those liberals and radicals who believed that final truth had been vouchsafed to them. The presence of these two large, intelligent, convinced, flaming, authoritarian blocs in the conference at first seemed to threaten the success of group discussion. At the same time, they felt that this procedure prevented them from fulfilling their evangelistic mission and from discovering whether others rang true to their ideal for the movement. It was precisely here that educational miracles seemed to happen, even before the first day was over, and continued with amazing frequency to the end of the conference.

Ponder again the advantage of deciding issues not on the floor of the whole conference, but largely in small groups. Think of the advantage of this system over the accustomed method of discussion in a great assembly or the sidetracking of burning questions by a diplomatic steering committee! Neither of the last-named methods really makes for an enduring understanding. The first gives an orator a chance to stampede a large audience (how easily it might have been done at Helsingfors!) or for a diplomat to confuse it with some astute political move, which the slower minds do not see until it is too late. The second method only postpones the real battle until the next conference. But in the small group, the orator and the spell-binder can be restrained; here the usually silent thinker can frequently interject that terse and quiet remark which deflates a hollow piece of verbiage as a small needle deflates a balloon; here the faddist eventually finds his own place; here the average man can obtain a chance to state the faith that is in him; and here it is possible for the leader to preserve the sense of intimacy that gives and takes, rather than to indulge the magisterial temper that imposes its will on the assembly. Even preachers find it difficult to deliver sermons to the members of their families. There are situations in life where long addresses are not effective, and intimate discussion groups testify to this fact. Helsingfors is probably the first international conference to use so radical a departure from the conventional method on so extensive a scale, and yet to register an unqualified success. There are some who claim that Helsingfors has given to international conferences a new method or, if you will, a new technique, which they cannot afford to ignore. Certain it is that leaders from a majority of the nations agreed with the remark of one of the oldest and wisest of all the delegates who said, "Helsingfors may, or may not, be the best way to run a national or an international conference, but the fact of Helsingfors makes utterly impossible for any one of us a reversion to the former conference and convention program."

These groups had to wrestle with the fundamental problem in all efforts at international understanding—the problem of language. The whole process of preparation for Helsingfors and the actual conduct of the conference itself were naturally rendered extremely difficult by reason of the language differences. It must be remembered at the outset that the World's Alliance of the Y. M. C. A. recognizes three official languages, English, French and

German, although the League of Nations recognizes but two, English and French. Consequently, all preliminary literature issued in connection with the conference, including the original questionnaire, the reports on the questionnaire, the manuals of instruction to leaders and recorders, etc., had to be issued in these three languages, and the very problem of translation was, in itself, great and complicated. For example, there is absolutely no word in the French language which clearly describes what our group discussion advocates mean by a "leader." The French use the word "chef," but this word does not have the democratic sense of one who is *primus inter pares* such as the English word has. That language has not, as yet, distinguished between one who assures an orderly direction to a discussion from one who, more or less, directs, if not dictates, the course of the discussion. Another English word which gave great difficulty, both to the French and the Germans, was the word "issue." They found it exceedingly difficult to translate just what was meant in English when an "issue emerging from discussion" was considered. Possibly their difficulty was partly due to the different meanings which the word "issue" has in English, and partly it may have been caused by the difficulty of distinguishing significant situations, arising in the discussion and requiring adjustment, from general propositions for debate.

The data-booklet prepared for Helsingfors had a subtitle "Helps to Discussion"—a succinct phrase tolerably clear in English—but two French translators spent an hour trying to discover a terse way of expressing "Helps to Discussion" in French, and finally gave it up as impossible. These are just a few instances of some of the casual difficulties that confront those who work in more than one language, and who seek today the development of international understanding. Further, at Helsingfors, the reports from the various groups were prepared, as has been intimated, in three languages. When these had been read and digested, and a summary of the day's discussion had been prepared in one of the three languages, it then had to be translated, often near midnight, into the other two languages before being handed to the printers or the mimeographers. Every step of the way, the language problem was a consideration.

And even though at Helsingfors itself three languages were used in the groups, nevertheless, probably one-third to one-half of the delegates had to participate in a discussion in a language which was not their own. The large number of delegates from the Scandinavian countries, with the linguistic ability for which they are justly famous, might be able to speak French or English or German, but when they did so, the sentences they used very often gave only an impressionistic picture of what they were really trying to say. One fact that clearly impressed itself upon the minds of all the delegates was that those who desire to work for international understanding in this world have almost a moral obligation to familiarize themselves with some of those languages, other than their own, through which the souls of other people alone can find adequate expression.

In spite of all this, to the amazement of all, *the language difficulty proved a real aid to understanding.* For, the speaker whose remarks are being translated begins to realize that he must be more accurate than usual. You cannot translate into French unless you know what was meant by the English or the German. A successful trans-

lation is not simply a matter of words, but a transference of ideas. Consequently, members of the groups had first to think clearly and then to speak slowly, simply and precisely; otherwise the interpreter would not understand and could not transmit aright. Further, even with good interpretations, those who knew more than one language frequently came to the assistance of an interpreter, especially if he erred in some slight inaccuracy. Every ear was trying to hear aright; every mind was tuned for understanding. While the language difficulty did slow up the process, it also made for understanding. It seemed at times as if the desire of the members to understand was in direct ratio to their difficulty in doing so.

Then, too, one must remember how often what we believe is a matter of words, as Gallio suspected when, according to the Acts of the Apostles, he told the Jews that if their dispute was a question "of words and names" they might settle it themselves. Words, around which the deepest sentiment and emotion may gather, often mean little when translated. One may make a pun in English, and have an interesting emotional reaction from the achievement; but translated into French, the pun is not so exhilarating. In one group visited by the writer, a German member stated that what we needed today was not "Lösung" but "Erlösung," but half the emotional quality of the underlying idea was lost in translation.

The very diversity of the views also made for understanding. Had there been but two points of view—the German and the American, for example—understanding might have been difficult. But there were many others as well. Very often the enlightening word came from the

DETROIT and Helsingfors are part of the same picture: A more democratic process in religious education, and in public organization for large social ends generally, is gradually enfolding itself; and many must be the incidental failures.

Again, as in the last of these Occasional Papers, the larger part of the space is given to the reporting of a conference—not because of its news interest, though this is considerable, but because of its bearing upon the methodology of the Inquiry movement. Others have reported on this event from other angles.

Incidentally, the report of this conference, to which several staff members of the Inquiry have given their time and effort during the summer months, may atone for the recent irregularity in the appearance of these sheets. In answer to a number of correspondents, it must be repeated that The Inquiry is not a paper that can be subscribed for—with the corresponding obligation of the editor to get it out at stated intervals. It is one of many forms of communication between the participants in our countrywide effort; one of the means we employ to spread the mood of inquiry into ways of applying our philosophies and religious beliefs in the actualities of every-day life. If occasionally we ask for financial contributions—and we need more of them right now to close the year without deficit—it is for the general educational purposes and activities in which these papers play a minor part.

Readers of these paragraphs who cannot afford a larger contribution will materially help if they will send, at any rate, one or two dollars to cover their share in the printing costs of the Occasional Papers.

Latin or Oriental delegate, whose experience of life had been still different and whose problem so distinctive that his testimony completely changed the temper of the situation. All this gave the conferees new angles of vision; they not only learned of points of view new to them but also began to sense the validity of points of view for which they had previously had no understanding or patience. Just as frequently in the League of Nations the smaller nations have pointed out the way when the greater nations had reached an impasse, so in this international conference the representatives of the smaller alliances—indeed, often the representatives of the so-called non-Christian countries—showed the way to the more powerful alliances in the so-called “Christian” countries.

These are only some of the factors which contributed to the understanding attained at Helsingfors but they deserve meditation and thought.

On the first day of the conference, an English journalist remarked to a young American en route via Helsingfors from Yale to Oxford as a Rhodes scholar: “It’s all humbug, and I wish that I could only tell them so! This isn’t the greatest generation that ever lived. Youth hasn’t anything original to contribute to the thought of the world. It never has done anything but mimic its elders, and that is what it is still doing today.” Writing of the conference on the last day under the title “Democracy Makes Good at Helsingfors,” this Rhodes scholar mentioned this incident and added that every one of his friend’s misgivings, as well as his own, had proved unjustified as the whole conference, by a procedure that served as a sensitive instrument of world interchange of thought, faced the complex questions that have been puzzling youth all over the world. “Every one has discovered that truth is a bigger thing than he or his countrymen have ever known.”

The communist in Moscow who affirmed that the Negro question would be discussed at Helsingfors in order to strengthen the exploitation of the Negro in America would have revised his opinion had he heard an American Negro, in giving data to a meeting of the whole conference, state:

It is a puzzled Negro youth who turns his eye inquiringly toward Helsingfors tonight. From South Africa he is asking how it is that many Christian leaders either through active advocacy or passive acquiescence give their support to such measures as the Color Bar Act. He does not understand the Christian conscience that has no word of opposition to restrictions upon land ownership by natives and no strong word of disapproval of the living conditions of native workers in the gold and diamond mines.

The Negro of the United States is puzzled about a Christian leadership that has for more than fifty years without serious protest witnessed flagrant violations of the 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution (those protecting citizens in the exercise of the right of suffrage) while national or sectional conventions are held every year in the interest of the enforcement of the Prohibition Amendment. He further wonders why it is that these same Christian leaders have permitted an anti-lynching bill to fail of passage twice for lack of influential backing.

He would have been surprised to find scattered through the groups Negroes from America, Negroes from South Africa, Negroes from West Africa—some of them leading discussion groups—Negroes who were known on two continents as foremost in the promotion of educational plans which were revealing to blacks and whites alike how deterioration comes to both in the pathway of exploitation. Anyone who feared that the Christianity of Hel-

singfors was of the exclusive, arrogant, militantly western type would have changed his view when the Indian nationalist, K. T. Paul, given the place of honor in conducting the conference opening period of worship, used selections for meditation, not from the Bible, but from the Gitanjali of Rabindranath Tagore in which the poet pours out his mystical and poetical soul in praise of the common Father of all mankind.

One American delegate, a student at the Sorbonne, wrote of his experiences under the title—“At Last a Y. M. C. A.” Two hundred and forty of the 1,500 delegates were under twenty-one. Contrary to the situation at former world conferences of this organization, over one-half of the delegates were under thirty. This was not, of course, completely a youth conference but a conference which at its closing session voted unanimously that at the next gathering half of the entire conference should be under twenty.

MERELY A STEP

Helsingfors thus was memorable, but it had many limitations. Its preliminary preparation was probably more thorough and widespread than that of any former international conference; but it was, nevertheless, more superficial than the importance of the issues demanded. The preliminary training of leaders accomplished wonders; but longer and more thorough training would have greatly enriched the whole process. The groups that made the most outstanding contribution were the Chinese, the Indians, the Negroes and the Czechoslovaks, but in another conference both the Orient and Africa should have a far larger representation. The conference was impoverished, too, by reason of the boasted policy of the Y. M. C. A.—“a movement by men for men.” A few bars have been taken down in recent years, and a handful of women were invited as official delegates. This small minority was almost lost, as it was scattered through the various groups. Only as the intellectual and social resources of the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. are used in combination, will inquiry as to the mind of youth at future international conferences have that quality of comprehension which is essential.

Protestants and Greek Catholics were there in plenty, but the Roman Catholics were so few that they did not represent the strength of the Roman Catholic Church either in Christendom or even within the membership of the Y. M. C. A. Finally, the conference was the poorer because, with but few exceptions, it was limited to professing Christians. If some of the Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian and Jewish members who have done so much to spiritualize and humanize the Y. M. C. A. in their own countries had come in larger number to Helsingfors, it would seem as though there would have been an even fuller sense of the presence of the God and Father of all mankind. But, happily, Helsingfors was not an end, as has been repeatedly stated, it was but a step in a continuing process.

Great as was the value attached to the results of the conference by a majority of the delegates, all recognized that the two years of preliminary inquiry and the intense discussions at Helsingfors had done little more than induce a mood of inquiry and a determination to carry through on a more scientific basis the processes already begun. The conference, therefore, gave a mandate to the new

World's Committee to set up such processes of research and inquiry, through both the World's Committee and the national Alliances, as will lead to the permanent transformation of the program of the Associations throughout the world.

Already the new World's Committee is at work preparing study outlines which will enable local Associations to carry much deeper the inquiries already begun. Wholly new projects for literature are planned. Interracial and international regional conferences on the Helsingfors model are projected. The progress which the group process effected in the democratization of the whole World's Alliance is having a certain carry-over in a greater democracy in national Alliances and local Asso-

ciations. The superlatively rich contribution of the 240 boy members of the conference will certainly move boys into places of increasing responsibility, nationally and locally.

A proportion of those who came in an inquisitorial or evangelistic mood testified to their unexpected acceptance of the method of group discussion and the mood of inquiry. In fact, one delegation which in advance had considered the possibility of having to leave the conference mid-stream if the majority did not conform to their way of thinking reported to their home constituency that the method of group discussion had saved the conference and made it possible for them to continue their membership in the World's Alliance.

Attitudes Toward Prohibition

An Outline for Group Discussion

I. What are some of the attitudes represented in the group?

1. Would you accept a drink of illegal alcoholic content if offered you—
 - a. at the home of a friend, privately?
 - b. at a party?
 - c. at a public eating place?
 - d. where you work?

Which, if any, of these opportunities come most often within your experience?

2. Would you buy a drink for yourself or your family—
 - a. from a friend?
 - b. at a place where you buy other provisions?
 - c. at a restaurant?
 - d. from a bootlegger?

Which, if any, of these opportunities come most often within your experience?

3. Are there occasions when it is expected of you to treat others to drink? If so, what do you do in such situations? Cite actual cases.
4. How do you feel toward people who buy and use liquor and how do you act toward them if they are—
 - a. members of your family?
 - b. old friends?
 - c. colleagues at work or school?
 - d. casual acquaintances?
 - e. storekeepers, salesmen, organizers or politicians who want to be on good terms with you?
5. In a political election or one in some organization to which you belong, would you vote for—
 - a. a person known to be a bootlegger?
 - b. a person who boasts about evading the prohibition law?
 - c. an habitual drinker?
 - d. a home brewer?

- e. a person who takes an occasional drink?
- f. a total abstainer?
- g. an active propagandist for strict law enforcement?

6. What do you, or would you, do to enforce or defeat the prohibition law?
 - a. Would you bribe a policeman to escape punishment for breaking it?
 - b. Would you tell other people where they can buy liquor?
 - c. Would you tell other people how to make home-brew?
 - d. Would you help bootleggers and other law violators to escape detection?
 - e. Would you tell the officers if anyone you knew was violating the law?
 - f. Would you take an active part in discovering and bringing to justice providers of illegal drink supply in your neighborhood?

If you have done any of these things, relate the circumstances.

II. What feelings or reasons underlie the attitudes disclosed?

1. If there should be a division of opinions on the questions asked in the first part of this outline, what are the main reactions represented in the group to some of the larger, underlying questions? How many in the group feel—
 - a. That it is wrong under all circumstances to touch drink?
 - b. That it is wrong to touch drink when it is known to have passed through illegal channels?
 - c. That it is wrong to use liquor in public places but not wrong to do so at home?
 - d. That it is wrong to tempt others but not to take an occasional nip oneself?
 - e. That it is right for older people who have the habit to drink in moderation but wrong for young people?

- f. That prohibition has been forced upon the people and that it is morally right to disregard it wherever one can safely do so?
 - g. That it is the duty of good citizenship by personal example and protest to disobey the eighteenth amendment as an encroachment upon personal liberty?
2. What questions of general social responsibility and public morals seem to be linked up with this question of prohibition? How many in the group feel—
- a. That obedience to the law is the first duty of the citizen, no matter how much hardship, or even injustice, this may involve?
 - b. That it is the business of government, not of the private citizen, to see the laws enforced?
 - c. That the demands of personal conscience are above the law and must be obeyed when the two are in conflict?
 - d. That upon the older folks rests the special obligation of setting an example of righteousness to the younger ones, and that non-observance of the prohibition law has a bad effect upon others, no matter how justifiable one may think it for oneself?
 - e. That a special obligation rests upon the younger people, who have not as yet been weakened by the effects of alcoholic indulgence, to deliver this nation, and eventually mankind, from the evils of drink?
 - f. That there are too many laws on the statute books to make it possible for the individual to know and obey them all, and that the intelligent citizen must use his own judgment as to which he must consider binding upon himself?
 - g. That if a person is willing to pay the penalty, it makes it all right for him to break the law?

III. *How have the present attitudes come about?*

1. What part, if any, has your personal experience played in giving you those attitudes toward prohibition which you have described? Tell of typical incidents in this experience.
2. If your views have undergone a decided change since prohibition came into effect, what is that change, and what has brought it about? Has your attitude been affected by—
 - a. a gradual recognition of the actual effects of prohibition?
 - b. a change in the thoroughness or method of enforcement?
 - c. newspaper and magazine articles?
 - d. the opinions of your friends or of your boss?

IV. *What shall we do about it?*

1. Go again over the questions asked in the first group (I, 1-6), and see whether this discussion has changed your attitudes in any of the respects that have been considered?
2. Can the group agree upon what it is right or wrong to do in any of the situations that have been named?
3. What steps, if any, can they take as a group to promote either the observance or the disregard of the prohibition law, whichever they are agreed in regarding as desirable?
4. Through what other organizations with which individual members of the group are connected can they promote those attitudes toward prohibition which have been agreed upon as desirable?

Don't Throw Away Your Copies

SEVERAL Inquirers have written in to comment on the usefulness of some of the briefer discussion outlines published from time to time in these pages. Others have intended likewise to use the outlines on suitable occasions only to find that their copies of *THE INQUIRY* had disappeared. Unfortunately, many of the older issues are now out of print so that the requests for additional copies could not be satisfied. We strongly recommend, therefore, that henceforth you keep a file—if you have not already done so—of these occasional papers and bind them up for future use and reference.

Some of these outlines have been especially appreciated by groups of girls in industrial employment (a series on "The Worker and His Job," April, May and June, 1925). Two have been used extensively overseas because they deal with problems common throughout the world to people sensitive to the finer ethical factors in human relationships ("Superior People," January, 1926, and "A Fellowship of Faiths," October, 1925). One outline ("Non-Resistance in Interracial Conflict," June, 1926) is being used this fall by a number of colored colleges because, while most of the educational literature on the subject of race relations addresses itself to members of

the dominant majority, this outline deals with it from the point of view of racial minorities.

In some cases, these smaller outlines have been the experimental wedge for larger projects—incipient or planned for the future (such, for example, as "The Church as a Fellowship," April, 1925; "Ethics in a Department Store," June, 1925; "Men and Missions," August, 1925; "Shop Imponderables," January, 1926; "Married Women in Industry," April, 1926).

Of most of these issues copies are still available for Inquirers who desire additional copies for practical use with their organizations.* (There are also still available at the office of the Inquiry copies of the mimeographed discussion outlines, "The Fellows I Work With"—popular with senior groups in social settlements; "Race Attitudes in Children"—mainly for parents and teachers.)

There is another reason for binding and preserving the occasional papers of the Inquiry: On going carefully over the copies so far published we find that even in the short period of a year and a half they testify to a develop-

* It will be much appreciated if readers who have spare copies of *THE INQUIRY* for March, August, September, December, 1925, or February, 1926, will kindly return them to the Inquiry office.

ment which it is very difficult to express briefly in abstract terms (though an attempt to do so has been made in a recent article in the *American Review*, reprints of which can be obtained on request from the Inquiry office).

Use of Occasional Discussion Outlines

From a number of letters attesting to the usefulness of these occasional shorter outlines, we select the following report of a discussion group in a small town of New Jersey as indicative of a practical method of combining this material with other available literature in cases where a group prefers to keep its program flexible instead of definitely committing it to a given subject over a whole winter.

Discussion as outlined in the monthly sheet, *THE INQUIRY*, has been held regularly. In many cases such discussion outlines have required two or three meetings for completion. Some discussions have been entirely oral, some entirely written and some a combination of both. In addition to these outlines, discussions based on topics in *The World Tomorrow* and *Information Service* (Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council), *Swords and Ploughshares* (Fellowship of Reconciliation), and parts of *And Who Is My Neighbor?* and *Missions and World Problems*, have been used. The course of some of the discussions was as follows:

A Fellowship of Faiths—Three meetings. Social distance first tabulated in writing with the result that many did research work in regard to such words as "Shintoist," "Brahman," "Confucian." Interesting questions grew out of the questions given. Much of interest was contributed as the result of thinking on degrees of social distance especially as between Asiatics and Western peoples. The most pronounced effect was that the ques-

tion of religious prejudice caused much heart searching in regard to the habit of denominational demarcation among Christian groups.

Down Our Street—Four meetings. No discussion throughout the year was provocative of so much individual interest. The social aspect of this subject necessarily touched every person involved in the discussion, and as a result many present declared themselves as having a new vision of "Who Is My Neighbor," as well as of the social applications of the parable of the Good Samaritan and of the Sermon on the Mount. The subtle argument by which communities to a great extent shift their Christian responsibility, namely, that "compromise brings peace," was expressed in this connection. It was much discussed, and various persons were convicted and were honest enough to acknowledge it, either of indifference in regard to Christian neighborliness or of fear of public opinion in applying their inner convictions. An interesting question was given for consideration: "Is Christianity an established fact, or is it an ideal toward which we are working?"

Superior People—Two meetings. What constitutes superiority was, necessarily, the question which no one could avoid. A new light on what ought to constitute superiority dawned upon several. The whole discussion was provoking and compelling.

These are but a few of the many discussions on economics, international relations, race relations, industrial relations. The two most obvious results achieved are: 1. A number of individuals are developing a consciousness of the necessity of thought, and an elementary idea of the technique of thinking. 2. A number of individuals have changed their convictions as to the standards of the Christian way and are actually applying the higher standard.

CONTRIBUTIONS to the Inquiry, according to the treasurer's last statement, amounted to not quite forty-eight thousand dollars from January 1 to September 9 of the present year. Since that date other contributions have come in, and various promises have yet to be made good. In all, new gifts totaling \$6,000 between now and December 31 are required to meet the obligations of the present budget for the year.

This may be a convenient occasion to remind our readers of a number of things: First, the Inquiry does not have, and never has had, the support of a foundation or permanent organization; it is supported entirely by voluntary contributions of individuals. Second, *THE INQUIRY* is not a periodical to be subscribed for. These "occasional papers" are quite incidental to the major purposes, and your financial contribution, whether large or small, expresses your desire to participate in the general enterprise. Third, the Inquiry is recognized by the government as an educational organization, and contributions to it may be listed for exemption in your income tax returns. Fourth, quite a number of promising projects could be started or advanced more rapidly if the officers of the Inquiry felt assured of a larger support.

News and Notes

Reprints from the *American Review* of an article describing the history and processes of the Inquiry, will be sent on request from the office of the Inquiry.

Olivet, according to all accounts, was a huge success. The secretary, Amy Blanche Greene, feels very superior over a fellow Inquirer who, earlier in the year, told her that "questions of sex relations could not be frankly discussed in such a conference." It has been done. John W. Herring, after the Olivet experience, now contributes to the *Federal Council Bulletin* in Hebrew.

Watch Hill, the conference of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, also was good. It took the form of an earnest evaluation of the educational processes through which the ideals of the Fellowship have been promoted hitherto and of a canvassing of new opportunities in the light of that experience.

The sort of attitude which our oriental friends denounce at times as western arrogance is typically illustrated in the following news item in the *New York Times*. [You will find worse ones in other papers.]

"The Amoy . . . was the first junk seen here since 1846, when a great Chinese sailing ship glided into the harbor here and almost caused apoplexy to the masters of civilized vessels." [The italics are ours.]

Cecil B. DeMille recently told a party of Japanese business men who were visiting his Hollywood studio that "the motion picture is the greatest medium for promoting international understanding. A scene taken in one country depicting a mother and father watching over a sick child will strike a responsive chord in the hearts of fathers and mothers the world over, regardless of national differences. Fundamentally, human experiences and people are the same the world over, and the motion picture is the best medium for revealing this fact to the world. If we understand the home life of each other, we cannot quarrel." What is wrong with this picture?

As a postscript to the Inquiry's study outline, *Why the Church?* (or part of it), the following extract from a recent letter of a mid-western Inquirer gives cause to meditate. He does not, of course, expect that anyone can answer his questions.

"The aspect which interests me most just now is the relationship between free inquiry

and our established ecclesiasticism. To what extent is a denomination, and to what extent are associated denominations, willing to conduct a scientific inquiry? To what extent is an inter-church representative free to pursue research in the spirit of science and the desire solely for the largest good? I am not thinking of the lack of freedom through occupation with detail, I am thinking of the subtle chains which bind all ecclesiasticism to the status quo. The problem of all co-operative Christianity is to make it genuinely cooperative and at the same time prophetic in its courage and scientific in its approach. That antinomy is one which is very difficult to resolve, yet it presents itself almost hourly in the work of a local church council.

"Protestantism cooperates in many ways: Federal Council, International Council, Missionary Education Movement, Foreign Missions Conference, Home Missions Council, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., etc. All of these are functionally fractions of the same total enterprise. Yet to what extent does commitment at the top to any of these enterprises filter down into the attitudes of the laity and the clergy in the local congregations? To what extent are the denominations deliberately educating their people into an interdenominational loyalty? To what extent does the promotion machinery of the average denomination negativate its national commitments to these cooperative enterprises?"

"How rapidly are these movements integrating? If they were fully integrated, would they themselves become so ecclesiasticized as to be static? Must the spirit of free inquiry always be extra-ecclesiastic?"

"Why does the tone of Helsingfors seem so different from that of Stockholm? Why do the Y. M. C. A. leaders of Europe breathe optimism and an air of acceptability to the powers that be, at the very time that we are told that European Protestantism as such is in dire peril? Is ecclesiasticism merely a necessary evil from which all of us should escape as largely as possible? How can we rescue Christianity from Churchianity and at the same time maintain our loyalty to the Church?"

"All this is familiar ground to some of you—but what are the answers?"

"Thank you for THE INQUIRY issue of June, 1926," writes a friend from India, formerly a student at an American university and engaged in a variety of occupations among us. "I read carefully these pages on 'Non-Resistance in Interracial Conflict.' So many of those stories have been experienced by me, and I give out as my frank opinion that the best solution to avoid such unpleasantness is to offer 'non-resistance.' I have found it has worked wonders in my case, though it was a very unpleasant thing in the beginning to swallow the pill of insult offered to me most heroically."

The discussion outline on attitudes toward prohibition [page 65] is being used in connection with an inquiry into the changes in family and neighborhood life that have accompanied prohibition. This study, under the auspices of the National Federation of Settlements, is descriptive and intimate rather than statistical and comprehensive. Inquirers desiring to take part in it should communicate with the director of the study, Mrs. Martha Bensley Bruère, at 99 Park Avenue, New York, who will also be glad to send

further copies of the outline to suitable organizations.

Adult education has moved into the subject of first concern in this winter's program of the New School for Social Research in New York, with courses by Everett Dean Martin, E. C. Lindeman and Grace Coyle, Harry A. Overstreet and Leta S. Hollingworth. In addition, social and religious workers are crowding the classes of S. Ferenczi, John B. Watson, Edwin B. Holt and others on various aspects of psychology.

In Wisconsin, the State Board of Health in one of its bulletins recruits participants in the Inquiry's study of conflict in local communities.

An experiment of far-reaching importance has been inaugurated by the Senior Teachers College of the Cleveland School of Education and Western Reserve University. A Division of Adult Education, directed by Alonzo Grace, has been added to the undergraduate program and offers seven courses: on the adult learning process and problems, on the principles of group discussion and other aspects, and including group discussion classes on The Character of the American People (an ethnological treatment with special reference to Cleveland) and on The American Negro. Cleveland, true to its reputation for social pioneering, is the first city to offer such a course of study as part of a college curriculum. [But watch for our announcement, in the next number of these papers, of a similar course at Columbia University for the second semester.]

The Slavic Immigrant Woman, by Bessie Olga Pehotsky, (Powell & White, Cincinnati), contains a detailed account of the steps by which a church organized itself to meet the needs of an immigrant neighborhood. While most of the program is along conventional lines, there are some items which will be found suggestive where similar circumstances prevail.

We have to plead guilty—in good company—to the charge of the *Christian Advocate* that a "technical jargon" has crept into the discussion of religious education. "We have

WHY wait until you receive the formal announcement of a new Inquiry publication and then have to order it? If you send now a standing order for every new publication, it will be sent to you fresh from the press, followed by the bill.

heard," says that paper, "so much prattle about 'adolescent,' and 'stimuli' and 'psychological complexes' and about 'data' and 'co-ordinate phenomena' that we have been tempted to run for our life." We often wonder whether with the present advances of specialized knowledge there will soon cease to be a common language other than the slang of the streets—and that also tends to become specialized. It is all very well to demand a simple style—but how can we use "words with color and fire and music in them" when there is need for a more precise description of educational processes that have

hitherto not been understood at all because of the vagueness of the terms in which they were discussed?"

Settlement Goals for the Next Third of a Century is the title of a symposium and digest of discussion at the Cleveland conference of the National Federation of Settlements, published by the federation (20 Union Place, Boston, 50 cents). An interesting innovation for a pamphlet of this character is a digest of topics, with briefer quotations, which permits of a rapid comparison of the views expressed on the various topics covered.

Occasional excursions into facetiousness usually end by plunging the editor of this page into hot water. So we will merely state that, according to the papers, the International Advertising Association is going to make another effort, between Christmas and Easter, to "sell" Christianity to the world. The Rev. Dr. Charles Stelzle, who heads the campaign committee, is of the opinion that "never have advertising men had a cause or a commodity to sell which had a wider appeal than religion." He also holds that "to proclaim religion is an advertising man's job."

A Third Conference on Conferences is to be held at Pocono Manor Inn, Pennsylvania, November 3 to 7. It is by invitation—that's why we do not mention it more prominently. But no doubt you will be invited if you explain your interest to the secretary, Gilbert Q. LeSourd, Room 817, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York. The main topics on this occasion are likely to be Leadership, and Evaluation of Results.

Project Teaching is the subject of a special number of *Religious Education* (308 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago) which is well worth study, both for its discussion of principles and for the variety of suggested applications.

Ethics of Investment is a subject of wide concern, as was demonstrated in the last few weeks by the publicity given to Professor Ripley's views and findings on a number of aspects of the subject. The Inquiry's Commission on Business and Industrial Relations is engaged in the promotion of group study of this subject and will welcome the contribution of experiences or ideas which may help others concerned in the matter. A preliminary study outline on this topic is to be published shortly.

Printer's Ink for October 7 contains a very outspoken article on conference procedure by Percy H. Whiting, a member of the craft.

College students who have spent their summer vacations as manual laborers in American industries, have met in conference for the first time early in September at Earlham College. The interesting discussions and the value of the experience are described in a report by the Rev. James Myers, industrial secretary of the Federal Council of Churches.

Few readers of these pages are likely to have seen the suggestive article on The Contributions of Research to the Harmonization of Opinion by S. A. Courtis in the June 5 number of *School and Society*. This excellent educational magazine, by the way, is edited by the well known psychologist, J. McKeen Cattell, and obtainable from the Science Press at Lancaster, Pa.